

Educational Center and the Vassie L. Peek, Sr. Educational Annex.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of St. Paul's pastor, the Reverend Doctor Henry P. Davis, Jr., to New Jersey's Baptist community. Over the years, Reverend Davis has been a shining example of devotion to his church. In addition to his commitment to his parish, the Reverend has served as Treasurer of the General Baptist State Convention of New Jersey, Moderator of the Seacoast Missionary Baptists Association of New Jersey, an Executive Board member of the New Jersey Council of Churches, and Secretary of the Moderator's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, USA.

Once again, I would like to extend my congratulations and warmest wishes to Reverend Davis and his congregation on the occasion of the centennial celebration of St. Paul Baptist Church. The church's contributions to the residents of Atlantic Highlands is unmatched. I can only hope that the next one hundred years will be as rewarding as the first.●

TRIBUTE TO WILLIE AND VERONICA ARTIS

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Willie and Veronica Artis of Flint, Michigan. On October 19, 1999, they will be honored by Mott Community College for their many contributions to the greater Flint community.

In 1979, Willie Artis co-founded Genesee Packaging, Inc., a maker of corrugated packaging with a focus on the automotive industry. Mr. Artis and Mr. Buel Jones began this company by utilizing the opportunities that were available to them through General Motors' minority business development programs. Using their extensive background in automotive contract packaging and corrugated manufacturing, Mr. Artis and Mr. Jones were able to penetrate the existing automotive market and build a relationship with a General Motors buyer.

Upon co-founder Buel Jones' retirement, Willie Artis took control of the day-to-day operations of the company and implemented a restructuring of the organization. Presently, Genesee Packaging employs a total of 230 people in three different plants and has just completed thirty-three consecutive months of profitability.

Willie Artis has over twenty-eight years of experience in sales, corrugated manufacturing and automotive contract packaging. He obtained his education at Wilson College in Chicago, Illinois, and continued his education through executive seminars for business owners at Dartmouth College. He is currently President and Chief Executive Officer of Genesee Packaging, Inc. in Flint, Michigan.

Willie Artis' wife, Veronica Artis, is also an instrumental force at Genesee Packaging, Inc. Veronica obtained her higher education at the University of

Wisconsin, Dartmouth College, Wharton School of Business, and Harvard University. Before joining Genesee Packaging, Inc., Veronica held various positions at Wisconsin Bell and Ameritech. Veronica joined Genesee Packaging, Inc. in 1989 as the Vice President of Administration and she is a member of the Executive Staff.

The event at Mott Community College on October 19, 1999, is a salute to Mr. and Mrs. Artis' success, their commitment to the greater Flint community, and their contributions as fine corporate citizens. A scholarship will be established in their names that will be held at the Foundation for Mott Community College.

I join Mott Community College and the entire Flint community in this celebration of two distinguished citizens, Willie and Veronica Artis.●

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT MERI OF ESTONIA

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, on October 13, the Broadcasting Board of Governors—which supervises all U.S. Government-sponsored international broadcasting—held a ceremony celebrating its new status as an independent agency.

Among the speakers was the President of Estonia, Lennart Meri, who delivered a very thoughtful and eloquent speech on the importance of international broadcasting to the mission of promoting democracy and freedom around the world.

I commend it to all of my colleagues. I ask to have printed in the RECORD, the text of President Meri's speech.

The speech follows:

THE UNFINISHED TASKS OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

(By Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia, Washington, D.C., 13 October 1999)

No one talking in this city about the importance of the media could fail to recall Thomas Jefferson's observation that if he were forced to choose between a free press and a free parliament, he would always choose the former because with a free press and a free parliament, he would end with a free parliament, but with a free parliament, he could not be sure if he would end with a free press.

I certainly won't become the exception to that practice. But if these words of your third president and the author of the American Declaration of Independence continue to resonate around the world, one of his other observations about the press may be more relevant for our thinking about the current and future tasks of international broadcasting. Responding in June 1807 to a Virginia resident who was thinking about starting a newspaper, Jefferson argued that "to be most useful," a newspaper should contain "true facts and sound principles only."

Unfortunately, he told his correspondent, "I fear such a paper would find few subscribers" because "it is a melancholy truth that a suppression of the press could not more completely deprive the nation of its benefits than is done by its abandoned prostitution to falsehood." And one of the greatest advocates of the power of the media to support democracy concluded sadly, "noth-

ing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle."

Jefferson's optimistic comment about the role of a free press came as he was helping to make the revolution that transformed the world; his more critical ones came after his own, often less than happy years as president of the United States. Given my own experiences over the past half century, I can fully understand his shift in perspective and can thus testify that were Thomas Jefferson to be with us today, he would be among the most committed advocates of international broadcasting precisely because of his experiences in the earlier years of the American republic.

For most of my adult life, I lived in an occupied country, one where the communist regime suppressed virtually all possibilities for free expression in public forums. As a result, we turned to international broadcasting like Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, the Voice of America, and the BBC to try to find out what was going on.

Let me go back in memory for a moment. Estonia was already under Soviet occupation when the "Battle of Britain"—solitary England's solitary battle against the totalitarian world—began. This is how I saw it, at the age of twelve, before our family was deported to Siberia. Nazi Germany bombastically boasted of its victories, London spoke of losses. And yet each broadcast from London, day after day, ended with the English newscaster's dry announcement: "Das waren die Nachrichten am 5. Juni, am hundert sechs und fünfzigsten Tage des Jahres, wo Hitler versprach, den Krieg zu gewinnen."—"These were the news of June 15, 156th day of the year when Hitler promised to win the war". There was no irony in these words. Rather, there was the pedantic knowledge of a pharmacist—how many drops of truth morning, day and night were necessary to keep the ability of doubt alive. The end of World War II found me in exile, buried deep into the heart of Russia, a couple of hundred kilometers from the nearest railway station. You had your Victory Day celebrations, and so had I. I bought a crystal of selenium to build a radio receiver. During the time of war, all radio equipment had been confiscated in Russia. Now, suddenly, I was holding in my hands a thumb's length of a glass tube containing a crystal and a short wire—my pass to freedom. The third receiver, built already in Estonia, finally worked, and I have been with you ever since. I doubt whether it is in my powers to give you a convincing picture of our spiritual confinement. Imagine being blind, unable to see colours, to perceive light or shadows; being surrounded by the void space without a single point of reference, without gravity that would feel like motherly love in this spiritual vacuum. And then, for a quarter of an hour, or half an hour, or even—a royal luxury—for a whole hour—the void would suddenly be filled with colours, fragrances, voices, the warmth of the sun and the fresh hope of spring. How many of you remember the Moscow Conference of 1946, to which so many Estonians for some unknown reason looked forward with hope? I remember Mr. Peter Peterson from the BBC covering the conference, I remember, the intonation of Winston Churchill, when he said of the winners of this very "Battle of Britain": "That was their finest hour". I remember the lectures of astronomer Fred Hoyle, to which I listened taking notes from week to week. Under Soviet rule, his discovery was banned as "idealistic".

Some years ago, when I received Javier Solana, the Secretary-General of NATO, in Tallinn, I compared the inevitability of the expansion of the island of democracy and